



## The Sand Farm Dept.

Conducted By

The Sand Farmer

Mail Suggestions and Inquiries to

Louis P. Haight, Muskegon, Mich.

### JIM SMITH

Back-to-the-Lander's Success

#### CHAPTER III.

##### The Beginning.

The next morning Jim was up bright and early, and the sun's rays revealed some things the moon had gilded over. Here he was in the "pine narrows," with a wife and eighteen-year-old daughter, and none of them knew a thing about farming, or the first necessities for existence. The oil stove was good as far as it went, but that would not last long, and it was out of the question to think of driving into town for bread, but neither his wife nor daughter could make bread. The oak grubs must be cut, and the stumps pulled, but how? The land must be plowed and planted if it was to produce, but he had never handled a plow nor even seen one in use. He did not know what to plant, nor when but he knew the strawberries were gone, for they had been in the market for several weeks. He must learn how and that meant he must have a teacher.

He had walked from one end of his little farm to the other, looking for some flower he might take to the tent to please his wife and daughter but the only thing he found was a harebell and some young wintergreens. The Jim Smith that came back to the tent that morning was a very different man from the one that had left the real estate office with the deed in his pocket for the virgin soil. He now realized how helpless a man may be if he lacks the knowledge which enables him to provide the food he must eat. But how was he to do it? It must be done now that he had started.

When he arrived at the tent Marguerite met him with a bright face, saying: "Good morning, dad, isn't it a beautiful day? Mother will soon have breakfast ready, and we shall enjoy helping you build our dear little house. When do you expect the carpenter?"

"Seven o'clock sharp," replied her father, "and that is not so very far away."

"Don't speak so loudly," said Marguerite, laying her pretty finger on her red lips. "Mother is feeling bad because the stove smokes, and the eggs are burnt, but let us pretend it is the best breakfast we have ever eaten."

Jim put his arm around his daughter's waist, drew her to him, and pressed a tender kiss upon her forehead as he said: "You dear little sunbeam. God bless you."

"How we come, Mother," cried Marguerite, as the two came near the new kitchen with a very worried look trying to keep back the tears that would come in spite of all she could do.

The eggs were burnt because she had forgotten to put any lard or butter in the pan. The coffee made from the creek water revealed a pollywog well cooked, and the toast smelled of the oil smoke, but all tried to make

the best of it and the appearance of Mr. Bill Jones prevented further discussion of the subject.

Bill knew how to make his movements count, and the two soon had the little shanty enclosed, the oil stove set up under a little "lean-to" which was to be both kitchen and piazza for a while. Tar paper covered the roof and sides. A little window lighted Marguerite's room, which was just large enough for her bed, and the wash bowl had to stand on the only chair, while nails in the wall held her dresses. She said she could stand on the bed when she dressed, and use the window for a mirror.

The other bedroom was only a little larger, while the combination sitting room, dining room, and parlor was only as large as both of them together, but it was home, and they owned it—all but the mortgage.

As Bill Jones left that night he said in a quiet kind of voice: "You don't know much about farming, do you?"

"No, I don't," said Jim frankly, "but I want to learn."

"Well, then, why don't you go to the Vacation Farm School?" said Bill.

"Where's that?" said Jim.

"Only a mile or two east," replied Bill.

"What kind of a place is it?" asked Jim.

"Well, it is this kind of place," replied Bill. "They take just such folks as you—only men with families who want to learn farming—and they teach them same as you would a doctor or a lawyer, just by doing the work and having someone to tell them how and why it should be done so and so. I don't know much about farming, but I've heard a good deal of talk about the school. The teacher is one of those fellows who asks questions until you feel you don't know anything, and then begins to tell you the most common-sense things, so you wonder why you didn't think of them long before instead of just going on doing the same old things your father did, just because he did them."

"He can tell you the kind of crops that will grow in acid ground, and the kind that won't, how to make your ground sweet, how to clear the land, the way to make things grow tall, or increase the yield of grain, and I don't know what all, but he is the fellow that is getting the big crops here, and his land wasn't no better than this here land when he took it. Good-night to you. Hope you will have good luck. I must be going," and Bill was gone.

"Wife," said Jim, as he sat on the cracker box at supper, "Bill has been telling me about a school near here where men can learn farming. Will you and Margie go with me tomorrow morning to see what it is like?"

"Delightful," was the eager reply from both, and so it was that big Jim Smith and family came to Vacation Farm.

(Continued Next Week.)

of earlier Spanish stock. The American Merinos have been bred nearly altogether for wool. Some breeders of the Delaine, or C type Merino, have bred to some extent for a mutton carcass in addition to fineness and length of wool. In the case of the Rambouillet there has been a greater effort to improve the mutton qualities.

A common characteristic of all Merinos and Rambouillets is the fineness of the wool. It is for this quality they have been bred, and while there are variations, there is as much of uniformity in fineness as in any one character of any class of sheep. This fineness is an important quality of wool, although its value in the market varies from time to time. The length of Merino wool varies, less than one-third of the fleeces being long enough for combing. Wool of the fineness of the Merino and of combing length (over 2 inches) is known as Delaine. The fleeces of fine-wool sheep are heavy in oil or yolk, sometimes losing over 70 per cent in scouring. While sometimes quoted at a seeming low price per pound on this account, it must be remembered that a fair basis of comparing fleece values is to consider the fleece weight along with its value per pound. Along with the fineness and oil of the fleeces of the fine-wool sheep there is the tendency to wrinkles and folds upon the neck and body, considered as necessary in the production of the finest wool. The extent of the development of wrinkles varies and is referred to later.

Other special features of the fine-wool sheep as a class are: The ability to stand traveling long distances

for feed and water, and the instinct to herd closely. It is these qualities that have caused fine-wool sheep to be used so largely on the range. In addition to the points named, the fine wools as a class have strong resistance to internal parasites and are long lived. They are slow in maturing, the ewes produce few twins, and do not rank high as mothers and milkers. The ewes are much more likely to breed in spring and summer than are the ewes of the mutton breeds, and this has caused them to be used by winter lamb raisers for mating with mutton rams. A few of the rams are hornless, but most of them have strong curving horns. The ewes are always polled. Sheep of this class have been found to thrive under a wide variety of conditions, sometimes on rather low, moist land.

#### The Leicester.

The Leicester is very easily distinguished from the other long wools by its lean and strong face. The nose is decidedly Roman and the head is bare of wool from the ears forward. The Leicester has a very wide and well covered back, but the depth of body is less than in the other long wools. This feature, with a strong tendency to lightness of belly wool, gives the breed a leggy appearance. The wool is finer and softer than that of the Cotswold or Lincoln, though not always so thick upon the body. The fleece hangs in locks smaller than those of the Lincoln and without the Cotswold appearance of ringlets.

The breeders' association for this breed is American Leicester Breeders' Association, A. J. Temple, secretary, Cameron, Ill.

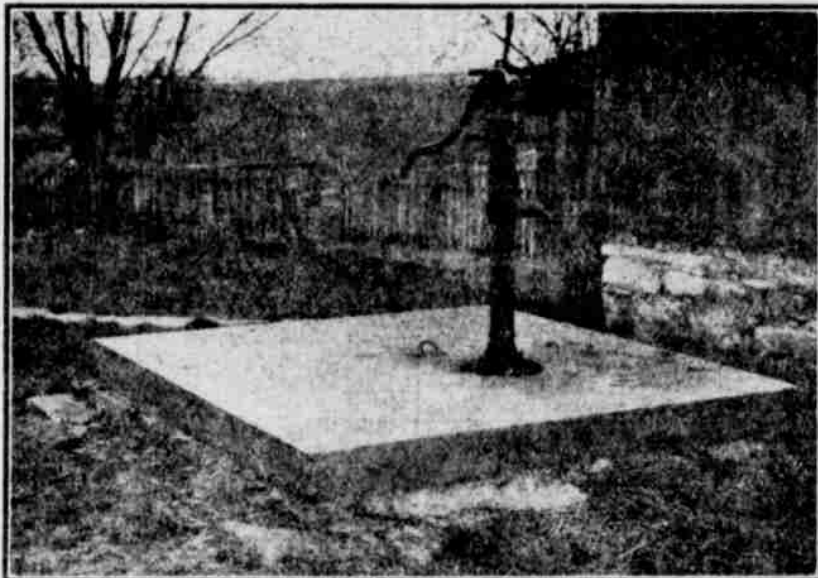
## Protecting Drinking Water

Concrete Well Platforms Are Conductive to Health

Even with an abundance of fresh air and wholesome food, the health of a country family is largely dependent on the purity of its drinking water. Since the principal source of farm water supply is the bored or dug well, the purity of the water is determined almost entirely by the ability of the well curbing and cover to keep out contaminating surface

#### How to Make the Reinforced Platform.

There are several methods of building a concrete well platform. The choice is dependent on the manner in which the pump barrel and stock are joined together. In the illustration is shown a platform 5 inches thick and 5 feet square, which contains a manhole fitted with a concrete lid. The pump



Sanitary Well Platform of Concrete.

water. If the well is curbed near the top with solid concrete (or with blocks or bricks laid in Portland-cement mortar) and is covered with a concrete platform, the healthfulness of the water is practically assured.

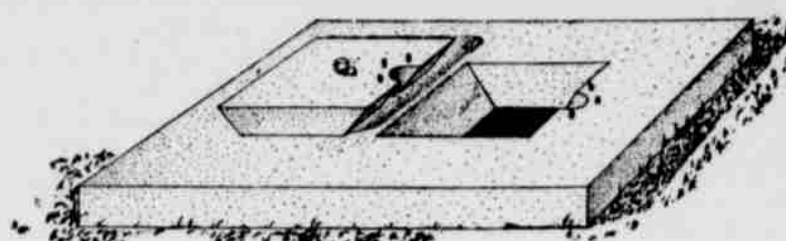
stock passes through the platform by means of a circular hole at the side and a part of the manhole opening. By this means the pump stock and barrel can be joined together and slipped into position by a person

working through the manhole. Afterwards the concrete manhole lid is set in place. Moreover this lid is heavy enough that it cannot be removed by a child.

In preparing the well for a concrete platform, see that 4 or 5 feet of the curbing near the top of the well is of solid concrete (proportioned 1:2:4), or of blocks or bricks laid up with cement mortar mixed in the proportion of 1 part cement to 1 1/2 parts sand. Carry the curbing 6 or 8 inches above natural ground level and grade the turf to this height so that surface water will flow away from the well. Prepare to mold the cover on a wooden platform of two-inch boards laid over the well or placed on a level spot of ground. For most wells, a platform 5 feet square by 4 inches thick is sufficiently strong. To provide for a manhole opening, build a bottomless box, of 1 by 6-inch boards, 5 inches deep, 2 feet square at the top and 18 inches square at the bottom—outside measurements. Another plan is to have a tinsmith make a round bottom-

place in the soft concrete around the pump opening ordinary bolts (washed and heads down) to the depth of 4 inches. To locate these bolts correctly, set them by means of a wooden block or templet in which holes have been bored and spaced exactly like those in the pump base. Lag bolts or similar devices may also be used for this purpose. Finish the surface of the platform with a wooden float and steel trowel the same as for sidewalks. If the greased tin form is used, the manhole cover may be cast at the same time as the rest of the floor. Reinforce the lid with short lengths of iron rods laid cross-cross.

As a lifting ring use half of an old bridge bit, or a hitching post ring, then block or templet in which holes of twisted wire or with a nut and a large washer. If the wooden manhole form is used, carefully remove it after four hours. One day later build the manhole lid the same as for the tin form with this exception—place greased paper or cardboard around the edges of the opening to prevent



Concrete Well Platform with Manhole Cover Removed.

less tin form 5 inches deep, 2 feet in diameter at the top and 18 inches at the bottom, after the pattern of a large bottomless dish pan. To either manhole form attach a wooden block of the size and shape of the pump barrel or stock. Grease the manhole frame and set it on the wooden platform where the opening in the well cover is desired.

Proportion the concrete 1 bag of Portland cement to 2 cubic feet of sand and 4 cubic feet of crushed rock, or 1 bag of cement to 4 cubic feet of pit gravel. Have the concrete just wet enough to flush a little cement mortar when tamped into place. Over the entire wooden platform, except within the manhole frame, spread 1 inch of concrete. For reinforcing, immediately place on this concrete 5-foot lengths of 3-8-inch iron rods running in both directions (cross-cross) and spaced 9 inches apart. Bend the ends to a hook-shape. Strengthen the platform around the manhole opening by placing an additional rod on each side. Bring the cover to its full thickness at once by tamping in the remaining four inches of concrete. There will be needed 3 bags of cement, 1-5 cubic yard of sand, 2-5 cubic yard of rock and 6 pieces of 3-8-inch by 10-foot rods weighing 23 pounds.

For fixing the base of an iron pump securely to the finished well platform,

the new concrete from sticking to that of the platform. To make the manhole lid lighter in weight, before placing the concrete, spread 1 1/2 inches of wet sand over the wooden platform inside the manhole opening and then tamp in the concrete. Take care to place the reinforcing within one inch of the bottom of the manhole lid.

#### Other Plans of Making the Platform.

Some persons prefer to make concrete well platforms in two pieces with the division line through the center of the pump opening. By this means the pump barrel and stock are easily joined and inspection is readily provided for. In other cases where the pump and stock can be joined together and lowered into the well as one piece, the concrete platform (removable) is made as a unit and with a single opening merely large enough to receive the pump stock.

Concrete well platforms built according to these methods can be depended on to protect the well from mice, vermin and scrub-water. In pure water there is health.



## Poultry Department

CONDUCTED BY

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GRAND RAPIDS • MICHIGAN

#### Poultry Pointers.

Don't fail to keep the poultry house floor covered with litter, and in this scatter the grain. This will keep them busy and the busy hen is the healthy and laying hen.

If poultry meat is the main object of the poultry raising you are seeking for, then select some breeds of the Asiatic class, such as the Light or Dark Brahma or one of the Cochins varieties.

If eggs are the object, choose your layers from the best laying strains—not always the highest scoring birds, but usually a well bred of standard requirements.

Poultry and dairy farming go well together. Milk fed to poultry in all forms produces good results. However, care should be given to keep dishes clean and sweet.

If you want to raise broilers the pens should be mated this month, and special feeding, one that will not force egg production, but will give a good yield of fertile eggs, should be begun.

We have often said there was too much "fancy" in poultry literature and not enough "utility." Both are necessary, but let us work along the line that is practical.

There are many hens on the farm, and among many of the poultrymen's flocks that do not lay fifty eggs per year, and some even less; but there are others with 250 egg records, and a few records even higher have been recorded.

If you have a select egg trade where you are receiving a fancy price for eggs, and have brown and white shelled eggs, sort them to color; their appearance will more than pay for the extra trouble.

Don't close up everything tight just because cold weather is here; fresh air and sunshine are two necessities for the perfect health of fowls, and to get the best results.

As a rule the cause of a flock being unprofitable lies more with the keeper and care they receive than with any superiority of one breed over another. Yes, there is as much difference in strain as in breed, too. Many have bred along utility lines as well as fancy, and utility should be the breeding standard on every farm and in every poultry yard. This should not be neglected for standard markings.

## BREEDS OF SHEEP FOR THE FARM

By F. R. MARSHALL

U. S. Animal Husbandry Division

A SERIES OF ARTICLES FROM FARMERS' BULLETIN NO. 576

#### LONG WOOL BREEDS.

The long wool breeds are the Romney Marsh, or Kent, the Wensleydale, and Devon Long Wool. There are some flocks of the first named in America. They have denser, closer fleeces than the breeds discussed, and it is claimed for them that they are more accustomed to lowlands and to

scantier fare than the other long wools, though hardly equal to them in conformation.

The breeders' association for this breed is American Romney Breeders' Association, J. E. Wing, secretary-treasurer, Mechanicsburg, Ohio.

#### Fine Wool Sheep.

All fine wool sheep are descendants

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Photo shows damage done to the roof of Rheims Cathedral by the German shells. The photograph was taken from one of the surrounding towers.